

LITERARY NOTES.

The concluding sale of the Brinley Library began in Boston yesterday and will be ended to-morrow. There is much that is valuable in this fifth part of the library, but the long periods elapsing between the sales have served in some measure to damp the interest of buyers.

One of the greatest woes of the author is the plague of letters from strangers, mostly admirers, inquirers and autograph-hunters. "Many people," says Professor Huxley, "appear to have the notion that I am a proprietor of a moral and intellectual drygoods store, and can provide them at once with an opinion on any topic that interests them from my extensive warehouses. I ought, no doubt, to feel the delusion an honor, but, as a fact, it is a dire oppression, and many a time makes me wish I had early recollect that wits of sages, 'Bene qui latuit deinceps visit,' and never put my name to a line of print." Philip Gilbert Hamerton says: "I am burdened with work; every hour, every minute of my day is apportioned to some definite duty or necessary rest, and three strangers make use of the post to ask me questions. To answer them I must make references; however brief the letters may be, they will take time; altogether, the three will consume an hour. Have these correspondents any right to expect me to work at hours for them? Would a cabman drive them about the streets of London during an hour for nothing? Would a waterman pull them during an hour on the Thames for nothing? Would a shoebuck brush their boots and trousers an hour for nothing? And why am I to serve these men an hour gratuitously, and to be called an ill-bred, discourteous person if I tacitly decline to be their servant?"

Miss Yonge, most indefatigable of novelists, has begun to write in collaboration with others. Her forthcoming book, "Strolling Players," has on its title page not only her name but also that of Christopher Coleridge.

Under the title of "Toscanelli" the first number of an interesting magazine has been published in French at Florence, Italy, by B. Westermann & Co. being the New-York agents. This publication, as shown in its preface, treats especially of the "Notes and Documents Concerning the Relations between Italy and America," from a geographical and not from a political point of view. This is sufficiently indicated by its name. Toscanelli was the famous geographer who communicated to Christopher Columbus the maps and information which finally led to the discovery of America. The present number of the magazine contains the reproduction of heretofore unpublished documents about Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci.

A new edition of the novels of Maria Edgeworth is coming from the press of Dodd & Mead. The volumes will be brought out in instalments, and will contain photogravure illustrations.

Among the letters from Charles Dickens left by his sister, the late Mrs. Austin, is one in answer to one of hers inviting him to her adopted son's funeral. After pleading a press of business as a reason for refusing the invitation, he adds: "Between ourselves, I have the greatest objection to attend a funeral in which my affections are not strongly and immediately concerned. I have no notion of a funeral as a matter of form or ceremony. And just as I should expressly forbid the summoning to my own burial of anybody who was not very near or dear to me, so I revolt from myself appearing at that solemn rite unless the deceased were near or dear to me. I cannot endure being dressed up by an undertaker as part of his trade show. I was not in this poor good fellow's house in his lifetime, and I feel that I have no business there when he lies dead in it. My mind is penetrated with sympathy and compassion for the young widow, but that feeling is a real thing, and my attendance as a mourner would not be myself."

With the May number, "The Century" is to have a new cover, designed by Mr. Stanford White, who was, by the way, the designer of the cover which replaced the old purple cover of "Scribner's Monthly" in 1880.

A book which has been twenty years in the press should be noted. It is the fac-simile reprint of the original Spanish edition, together with a literal translation into English, of "The New Laws of the Indies." The "Pall Mall Gazette" says of it: "It has been printed for private subscription only at the Cicer Press, and is one of the several speculations of the late Henry Stevens, of Vermont, who prefixes it to an historical introduction. This volume is in small folio size, and the fac-simile is made from the unique copy on vellum in the Grenville Library of the British Museum of the original Spanish edition of the Laws, dated Alcalá de Henares, July 1st, 1543. This is the first reprint of the first translation into English of a book of singular importance to all students and collectors of works on American history. The entire impression consists of only thirteen copies on the finest writing vellum, and seventy-five on the finest hand-made paper. As it is illustrated not only with numerous ornamental blocks of Indians, but with portraits of Columbus, its appearance just now is very opportune. It is not, however, everybody's book, inasmuch as ten guineas is demanded for the cheaper copies, and 2250 for the vellum examples."

The keen interest which M. Taine took in literature is illustrated by a story of his deathbed he sent for the proof-sheets of M. José María de Heredia's new volume of poems because he did not expect to live until the volume was published.

Of Taine, by the way, this little personal description is given by an English friend: "Taine struck me before he chatted as a solid, comfortable old Belgian of the Flemish provinces. He was fleshly but not corpulent, had well-shaped features and a massive head. The sandy beard was sparse, his hair a pale brown, and his face rather sallow and of a complexion rhyming with that word. His eyes were pleasant once he got into touch, they expressing kind, intelligent curiosity and honesty, the cast notwithstanding. His manners could not have been more unassuming. But, to use an expressive French phrase, they were bien poses, and spoke of the habit of feeling a good position which relieved him from the need of pushing his way. Nobody could have been more free from that hateful vice of our day, the passion for self-advertisement. A photograph of his was never in the market. He sat with reluctance for his portrait as a staff-writer of 'Les Débats.' It was to be brought into a collective picture of all his then living colleagues for a history of that paper that was to appear on its centenary. Taine's unobtrusive disposition led him to keep quiet in his home circle, and to dread press publicity."

New Publications.

EPILEPSY. An account of the only rational mode of treatment. Simplified edition, 100 pp., \$1. THE ILLINOIS SANATORIUM, New-London, Conn. Simplified Edition, post paid, for 25c, or stamp.

THE HUMAN HAIR: Why it Falls Off; Tumor Gray, and the Remedy. By Prof. HARLEY PARKER, A. M. LONG & CO., 1013 Arch St., Phil. Pa. "Every one should read this little book"—A. G. Hartman.

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Lost and Found.

LAST—Bankbook No. 549,704, bank for Savings, 77th Street, West End-ave., New-York. Payment stopped. Please return book to bank.

TERRIBLY INCREASING.

The Authorities of the Board of Health Give Some Important Information About the Present Condition of the People.

At no time in the history of New-York City have there been so many deaths from pneumonia as now. The official figures show nearly twice as many deaths from this cause as occurred than for the last five years. This is something terrible.

Dr. John T. Nagle, Registrar of Vital Statistics, says that this increase is due to the influence of grip. He says that grip may be called epidemic just now, and that in the majority of cases grip is a vital, contributing cause to pneumonia and all dangerous pulmonary troubles. At this time of the year when we are changing over from winter to spring, there is always a low order of vitality; a reaction from the strains of the season. The blood does not flow so full nor rapidly; the strength is less. For this reason grip has a much better chance than at any other season.

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